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SUBJECT: LETTER FROM PRESIDENT OBBASANJO TO PRESIDENT BUSH  
RE PEPFAR

1. On October 5, 2004 Ambassador received a letter from the President of Nigeria, Olusegun Obasanjo dated October 4, 2004 to be transmitted to U.S. President George W. Bush. Original is being sent via unclassified pouch.

Begin Text:

His Excellency,  
President George W. Bush  
The White House  
1600 Pennsylvania Ave  
Washington, DC 20502  
USA

Dear President,

It is with great pleasure that I am writing to introduce you to the Pan African Health Foundation (PAHF), a new international non-profit (501 (c) 3) initiative. PAHF seeks to develop long-term sustainable solutions to the very heavy and growing burden of infectious diseases in Africa in a novel way. It is being supported by my government, the Nigerian private sector and U.S. and other foreign companies operating in Nigeria. I would be very honoured if the US government participates in this critical project as well. I have outlined below, for your consideration, information about PAHF and its relevance to the growing burden of disease in Africa, and how it fits with the overall objective of your President's Emergency Plan for AIDS relief (PEPFAR).

A major facilitator of disease spread throughout Africa is unavailability or unaffordability of essential medical supplies to prevent or treat these diseases. In trying to address this problem, and due to limited production capacity in Africa, the traditional international aid approach has been to donate these supplies, albeit on an ad hoc basis. While this approach provides short-term solutions, it falls short of the ideal situation in which African countries become self-sufficient. PAHF's approach moves toward this ideal by developing production facilities for essential medical supplies within Africa.

PAHF's first project will be an Auto-disable (AD) syringe factory in Port Harcourt, Nigeria. Safe syringes are very important, not only because injections are the most common medical procedure, numbering 16 billion each year, but also because syringes are becoming increasingly critical in the fight against HIV/AIDS, since they are used for investigating and monitoring People Living with AIDS (PLWA). The WHO estimates that nearly half of all syringes are reused in Africa, causing 1.3 million early deaths, 26 million years of life lost, and leading to US\$535 million in direct medical costs. In Nigeria, it is estimated that ten per cent of all new HIV/AIDS are caused from blood sources, including unsafe injections. AD syringes prevent the dangerous re-use of syringes by ensuring that each syringe can only be used once. The Port Harcourt syringe factory will produce 135 million syringes each year, providing safe injections and immunizations for our children.

As you know, due to Nigeria's limited budget for public spending, we directly support very few non-profit organizations. However, PAHF's approach differs greatly from traditional charity work and is very much in line with our own development objectives. We also believe that PAHF will bring large and lasting benefits to the Port Harcourt community, and Nigeria as a whole. We are, therefore, supporting PAHF with a donation of US\$1.5million. It is our hope that this project can usher in a new standard for development assistance.

It is my great hope that you will consider joining us in this important initiative by dedicating funds from your PEPFAR initiative for this project. As we welcome the expanded treatment of PLWA made possible by your compassionate initiation of PEPFAR, it has become very important to ensure that syringes used in monitoring PLWA progress are AD syringes, in order that this deadly

pandemic is not worsened through the dangerous reuse of syringes. PAHF's Ad Syringe Project thus relates to your PEPFAR initiative in a very direct and timely manner, since it will help satisfy the increased need for safe syringes.

Please kindly note that your government's contribution, either directly, or through a matching funds basis, will greatly expedite PAHF's ability to raise the US\$20 million necessary for the AD syringe project. I look forward to further discussing your potential involvement. Please do not hesitate to contact me for more information about PAHF and its important role.

God bless you.

Yours sincerely,  
/s/  
Olusegun Obasanjo  
END TEXT.